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SUBJECT: TFIZ01: DART UMM QASR TRIP REPORT 9 APRIL 2003

SUMMARY

1. On 5 April, the DART made a third assessment trip to Umm Qasr. The DART joined up with two members positioned in Umm Qasr and met Coalition force representatives and five community leaders, who have assumed the role of the civilian leadership of the town following the departure of most Baath party officials. END SUMMARY.

SECURITY

2. Although less looting is reported, Coalition forces are concerned about the security of port facilities. According to Coalition forces, the port's basic infrastructure is sound, but it has not received proper maintenance for years. Coalition forces stressed that maintenance would be a key factor in any plans to re-establish proper port management. If there is not currently a maintenance component in the Stevedore Services of America's current contract with USAID, it is suggested that the contract be revisited to include such a component.

3. Concerns were expressed about the stability of Umm Qasr once Coalition forces begin to move out. There is a great need for police enforcement and patrolling. Concerning potential reprisals against Baathist party members, Coalition forces stated that the best they can do is to mitigate retribution as Coalition forces lack a police force as well as adequate capacity and resources.

CIVIL AFFAIRS

4. Coalition forces are very concerned that international organizations (IOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will bypass Umm Qasr because they do not see a widespread need for humanitarian assistance. If this occurs, the Coalition forces feel that they will be expected to assume this role, but caution that they lack the capacity to fill this vacuum. Coalition forces are eager to hand over humanitarian assistance such as water distribution to appropriate U.N. agencies, IOs, or NGOs.

WATER

5. The water distribution continues to be an issue of concern in Umm Qasr. While the Coalition forces intended that water would be provided free of charge to the local population, a system was not put in place to monitor the water truck drivers. On 5 April, Coalition forces announced that they will pay the drivers and ensure that water will be free of charge. As 7 April, 26 private trucks were providing water to Umm Qasr. However, while 14 drivers are providing water in town at no cost, 12 are selling it in outlying villages. Coalition forces do not have the staff to monitor the distributions and have requested UNICEF or another organization assume this role. Civil Affairs representatives also requested that the DART assist with water and food coordination.

FOOD

6. Community leaders who met with the DART stated that there were 45 food agents in Umm Qasr. The majority were

shop owners and old women. There are currently 33 agents who are willing to restart food distribution. The remaining 12 are either too afraid to come forward or are in Basrah. The leaders showed the DART a list with the names of food agents and beneficiaries. The DART will facilitate a meeting with the World Food Program to re-organize the food distribution network. Community leaders have contacted these agents and say that they will also be able to absorb the distribution previously handled by agents that have fled.

17. The DART asked if it would be possible to identify the internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Basrah presently living in Umm Qasr. The community leaders pulled out a list and replied that they had already taken the initiative to identify the IDPs from Basrah and they had come with their ration cards. . The DART suggested that the food distribution be prioritized for the most vulnerable and that dairy, meat, and vegetables could be added to the first distribution. Coalition forces have offered to facilitate the movement of the commodities from the warehouse for distribution.

18. Umm Qasr residents have expressed frustration over the numerous assessment trips by international organizations, without tangible results. The residents repeatedly expressed the need for foods rich in protein, such as meat, eggs, and dairy products as well as the need for propane gas for cooking.

ELECTRICITY

19. Coalition forces have once again repaired and restored electricity to three-quarters of the town. The electricity plant was recently sabotaged by six persons; one is in custody. While the electricity to the town is functioning, the system has become more vulnerable due to the sabotage.

MAPPING

10. The community leaders mapped off the principal housing and commercial sections of Umm Qasr. In total, the town is comprised of 82 streets; each street has 72 houses. Up to three to four families live in each house. The North Section is the North Indian Camp ("Hindi Court"). It consists of 37 streets and has 6,600 inhabitants. To the west of this is the South Indian Camp. People living in South Indian Camp worked at the Port and were forcibly relocated by the regime from their homes near the port to this area. Houses around the Customs Office are associated with the Ministry of Industry. Resident of this sector worked at the pipe, steel, and cement factories.

EMPLOYMENT

11. According to community leaders, the lack of employment and income are critical problems in Umm Qasr. Nearly everyone worked for the government and the last salary received was prior to the start of the war. In addition, residents have spent all their money to prepare for the war and in fear that the money would be worthless once the regime changed. It is especially urgent that the port begins to function since 10,000 people were previously employed there. The leaders stated that the quick development of jobs will be crucial to keep stability in Umm Qasr.

VULNERABILITY/REPRISALS

12. Community leaders reported that a few nights before the meeting with the DART, a mob of over 1,000 people torched the house of a Baathist member in North Indian Camp, and attempted to burn other Baathist houses. However, one of the community leaders prevented further reprisals by telling the mob, "We've had many rivers of blood and destruction. We should let bygones be bygones and rebuild our country." The leaders expressed concern that great physical destruction will take place on 14 April, the Shi'a Day of Martyrdom.

TOWN COUNCIL

13. Community leaders have identified a building located near the police station that could be used for office premises. It is a bare shell and would require rehabilitation and equipment. Capacity building and training in forming a town council, democracy, and elections

was requested by the community leaders. They also expressed interest in media messaging (print, radio, television) in order to promote a climate of reconciliation and to prevent lawlessness, looting, and reprisals. Community leaders offered to organize a volunteer police corps.

JONES